

MISS SCHEFF WINS "PRIMA DONNA"

Completes Triumph With Her Own and Only Petite Drum. CAPABLE COMPANY MARKS OFFERING. Opera Takes High Musical Rank in Class With "The Serenade."

The audience at the Columbia Theater last evening which welcomed Miss Fritzi Scheff in a new comic opera, "The Prima Donna," was as elite as it was large and as large as it was enthusiastic. So high a place does Miss Scheff hold in the regard of Capital theatergoers that the chery throng that filled every seat and taxed the standing capacity of the theater breathed the spirit of a personal encouragement in striking contrast to the critical attitude of a first night audience. And while the book of Henry Blossom and the music of Victor Herbert may not have received a major share of attention last evening, the general verdict this morning is that this captivating prima donna herself is scarcely more welcome than the new "Prima Donna."

On two occasions last evening applause swept away all barriers and refused to subside until its own good time. The first storm broke when President Taft and Mrs. Taft were ushered into a box, and the second burst with redoubled force when Miss Scheff answered an encore in the second act with a stirring tattoo on her own and only drum.

Perhaps the second occasion was the more momentous for Washingtonians will have the privilege of seeing President Taft many times, but they entertained great fears that the passing of "Mlle. Modiste" had also marked the passing of this latter rare and enjoyable spectacle. These apprehensions proved groundless.

Drum Scores Hit. First Miss Scheff "commanded the drum" to the mild accompaniment of a baton. Then, just to show the importance of this modest little drum, she trotted it out and hammered out of it enough sparkle and vim to make every human being in that dignified gathering feel like letting out a war whoop and kicking its respective heels together three times to attest the simple joy of being alive.

Miss Scheff may protest that she does not owe her success to her ability as a drummer. Certainly not. And seldom has she had better opportunities to warble to her own sweet satisfaction than are afforded by the score of Victor Herbert. The singular richness and clarity of her voice were shown to splendid advantage in "The Butterfly." Her vivacious personality as well as her perfect command of every note found expression in "A Little Soldier." Both these factors and an indomitable charm that goes to make Miss Scheff's performance combined to render "When We Command the Army," the musical hit of the performance.

But Miss Scheff, you will say, could go far toward making a success out of anything with a tune, does "The Prima Donna" make good? Washington will approve the verdict of other cities in saying that it does. We will even say that this offering appears destined to take a place not far behind "Mlle. Modiste," notwithstanding all the halo that surrounds the name of the prima donna. Miss Scheff's initial success. That is high praise, indeed.

But one thing could hold it from the eminence attained by the earlier production—that the book, Mr. Herbert has done his work far better than Mr. Blossom. Mr. Blossom's idea was right. There is no law, unwritten or otherwise, that makes it necessary for the entire company to troop on the stage at the close of each act and execute vocal acrobatics. The dramatic climax to the first act is a fine conception. It would have a fine effect if the liberal allotment of plot did not contain several unwholesome dashes of melodrama which seem singularly out of place.

An Added Attraction. Mons. Beauvivre (Nace Bonville), father of Athenee (Miss Scheff) has borrowed heavily from Captain Bordenave (William Harcourt). Promises to present his daughter as sufficient security for these loans, but when the time comes Athenee's father hesitates to present Mlle. Athenee to his dissolute creditor. Armed with the net for Beauvivre's heavy debt, Bordenave takes matters in his own hands when he finds an opportunity to meet Mlle. Athenee alone. While the young woman makes every effort to escape Bordenave clinches the bargain by burning the note and proceeds to demand forced payments in the form of favors from the prima donna. At the crucial moment this slight wisp of a girl springs a David and Goliath movement by dragging this husky captain across the floor and carelessly hurling him into an adjoining room. She accomplishes this feat single-handedly, to be translated literally, for she opens the door with her free hand.

True, a similar situation without its absurd features scored in "The Great Divide." But Miss Scheff is not Margaret Anglin and probably has no aspirations toward emotional acting. Why ring in such a situation in comic opera. Recalls Earlier Successes. With this single exception Mr. Blossom has evolved a plot of singular cleverness and Mr. Herbert has composed a score that will stand comparison with "The Serenade" and "The Fortune Teller."

One of the most noteworthy features of the production is the capable company. In James E. Sullivan, "The Prima Donna" exploits a comedian who deserves a place in the first line of fun-makers and his methods are far away from the stage traditions of the average comedian. In "I'll Be Married to the Music King" he has shown a similar success second only to that of Miss Scheff, and in the first act, as musical director of the "Comme d'Or," gave a clever character study.

William K. Harcourt played the blustering army captain with a sureness of touch above comic opera caliber and Martin Hayden uncovered another good singing voice in the second act after an appreciative audience already thought he had more than redeemed the price of admission.

But, say, did you see Fritzi Scheff beat that drum? J. R. HILDBRAND. MAJESTIC—Moving Pictures and Vaudeville. A vaudeville program of merit and a moving picture array above the average mark the offering at the Majestic Theater this week.

A comedy, "Having One on the House," scored a hit, while a second sketch, "Tom Katz Night Out," ran a close second. Pluto and Pluto gave an original turn as pantomimic and musical clowns. Travelogues and new illustrated songs complete the program.

"BLUE MOUSE" NOT SPICY, BUT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE

Fails to Qualify for Immortal Five—Goes One Better.

Scores by Sheer Merit of Mirth and Excellent Cast.

Some folks who, way down deep in their souls, ever hoping that, after the censors of Trenton, N. J.; Richmond, Va.; Evansville, Ill., and even the Capital's purity squad get through with a play, some naughty or at least spicily lines may have been overlooked, and taxed the standing capacity of the theater with slight gasps of disappointment, however, had little chance, for these people had been forced by good clean and breezy humor to forget what they had come to see.

For months Washington had heard rumors and whispers of "The Blue Mouse." A manager in New York who nightly saw the crowds wending their way to the show house across the street where was billed a play said to be even fast enough for jaded old New York lost his temper several weeks ago and declared the stage should be renovated, fumigated, and, if necessary, reforested. Immediately New York and the curious ones of the country at large wanted to know just what specific plays had attracted the attention and aroused the ire of this reformed manager.

Only Near-Disappointment. This tells why some of the curious of the Capital aided in filling the Belasco to overflowing last evening. The next part of the story is the part that tells of the near-pangs of disappointment and the desire of a few of the still more curious to meet with the press agent or the person directly responsible for the report that colored glasses and ear muffs would be necessary for the proper enjoyment of this Fitch production.

Naughty? Nothing of the kind. In "The Blue Mouse" Mr. Fitch gives to the theatergoer a most enjoyable and even the slightest thrill. Things may have been done to "The Blue Mouse" by the blue pencil men who, at large, want, and "The Blue Mouse" in New York may have been a different matter, but the "Blue Mouse" in Washington is a play that the Shuberts might well take back to the big city the revised edition of Mr. Fitch's play, and it need never travel through the country with advance notices that excite the type that felt slightly disappointed at the end of last night's performance.

Profits by Changes. All this about the real character of "The Blue Mouse," and now about the actors, Washington is not seeing the "original New York company," and again Washington is profiting—"again" being used with the understanding that "The Blue Mouse" may have been revised for consumption outside of New York.

As the Blue Mouse Eliza Ryan does not suffer in the least from the knowledge that the fair Mabel has won renown and praise in her own country, and that she is the leading actress in the role could have held the audience in the grip of her bold and naughty things from the beginning, but Miss Ryan at all times last night held away from the dead line, and even her one swear word sounded cool and innocent.

More of the same may be said of Albert Grant, who as single-minded, private secretary possessed of beautiful features, is known as the "New York company," is known at his real value, but Mr. Grant could have been picked for the original railroad president, and the play-going public would have lost nothing. If there is anything more that can be done to the part than is done by Mr. Grant it remains for a most clever comedian to come forward and do it.

Robert Dempster as the secretary with the beautiful wife is better than Jamison Lee Finney of the original company. Cast Uniformly Strong. Other members of the company are equally strong. Sam Reed, as the liverman from Coahoma, N. Y., must surely have stopped over at the station between trains and met the original of the part, and Lillian Hall, as the coy little 300-pound wife of the railroad president, was responsible for much of the continued laughter.

In the story of the play you can see the possibilities for amusement. A young secretary of a railroad president who enjoys the society of pretty women and the secretary being anxious to be advanced to an important position hires a dance hall actress to impersonate his wife. He has a real wife and loves her and when it turns out that the dance hall actress is "The Blue Mouse" is mistaken by all for his wife and his really and truly wife is taken for "The Blue Mouse," one can see many opportunities for complications and Mr. Fitch did not overlook many.

Many friends of Miss Charlie Courtland were interested in watching the work of the young Washington girl who, despite the opposition of her parents, left her home on the stage. Miss Courtland, in addition to playing a minor part, is understood to Miss Alice Warner, the real wife.

COLD HURTS FRUITS. LYNCHBURG, Va., March 23.—The Government thermometers here registered 23 degrees and there is little doubt that much harm to early fruit was done. Early small fruit trees have been killed for two weeks and the freeze came with the blooms wet from Sunday's snow. Late fruits are hardly advanced enough to be injured.

IT WILL APPEAR. The great exposure of dental fakers and schemers by Washington's foremost dentists. We originated this idea to save Washington people from having their teeth ruined, and we will keep our promise. WATCH FOR IT. RED CROSS DENTAL OFFICE. 939 Pa. Ave. N. W.

PROGRAM FOR TONIGHT AT CAPITAL THEATERS

- COLUMBIA—Fritzi Scheff in "The Prima Donna." BELASCO—"The Blue Mouse." NATIONAL—John Drew in "Jack Straw." CHASE'S—Vaudeville. ACADEMY—"Tony, the Bootblack." LYCEUM—"New Century Girls." GAYETY—"Girls From Happyland." MAJESTIC—Moving Pictures and Vaudeville.

MURPHY TRAVESTY LEADER AT CHASE'S

Valerie Bergere Adds Another Triumph to Her Already Long List.

Every part of the current Chase program is good, and it has many parts. Among the headline features are W. H. Murphy and Blanche Nichols, who appear in a hilariously laughable burlesque, "The School of Acting." The travesty is to do with a broken-down tragedian who conducts the "school," an amateur playwright, and a soubrette out of work, who had already been a member of seven different companies this season. Assisting Mr. Murphy and Miss Nichols are Lorna Russell and L. M. Jones. It is one of the funniest burlesques seen here this season.

Another top-liner, Valerie Bergere, an excellent supporting company, appearing in a one-act comedy, "The Morning After the Play." Miss Bergere portrays the part of an actress who has just met failure, but who is in love with a young man who in turn is claimed by a married society woman. Valerie Bergere is given plenty opportunity to display her emotional power, as well as comedy. Emma Campbell and Herbert Warren give her excellent support.

The Big City Quartet is the musical feature of the bill. Messrs. Rover, Bates, Caffery, and Reed are singers of merit, their respective solos always requiring encores. Mr. Reed's rendition of "Asleep in the Deep" has been a hit. The Alhambra troupe of bicyclists present many new ideas in trick riding, and close their act with a burlesque race, "A mile in thirteen seconds."

Al Lawrence, a popular comedian, gives an irresistibly humorous mimesis of types of people met on the streets. The Helms are a duo of juvenile program artists who make one forget their youth, and imitate the most celebrated professionals. The "Merry Widow Waltz" was an amusing take-off on the famous opera. Newbold and Carrel present "An Interrupted Angling Party," and the vaudeville act, "Life of a French Sailor" completes an interesting bill.

ACADEMY—"Tony, the Bootblack," Full of Melodramatic Action. "Tony, the Bootblack," at the Academy, is full of action from start to finish.

The heroine is saved from one danger but to be plunged into another, and none of those who are opposed to the Black Hand escapes without being at least once in danger of losing his life.

But all ends happily; the heroine recovers her sight just in time to save her lover from death; after their many adventures the two sets of lovers are united, and the villains are handed over to the police.

What might otherwise be too overpowering in its intensity is relieved throughout by wit and sparkling dialogue. Dave Genaro is at all times on the stage, either to amuse his audience as a vaudeville artist, or to thrill it as the hero. The dancing and singing of Genaro and Bailey have long been the chief attraction of the entertainment.

Grace Morton, who is stolen by the Black Hand, and whose rescue furnishes the main action, is very well played by Cora Quentin. The plot is well staged, the scenery is good, and some of the effects, especially the ride down New York harbor, are excellent.

LYCEUM—"New Century Girls" Up to the Minute.

"The Hotel Tlespin" and "Beans" are the two pieces handled in highly creditable fashion by the New Century Girls at the Lyceum this week, both sketches offering excellent entertainment.

A vim and dash seldom seen in the burlesque show marked the work of the entire company. The work of the comedians in the various character parts is above the standard. An exceptionally good olio adds to the performance. Al Goldman and Barrett and Belle in nonsensical song and dialogue were heartily received.

MAN'S BODY FOUND IN BLACKSMITH'S PIT

RICHMOND, Va., March 23.—A mysterious case was reported to Coroner Taylor when the body of an unidentified white man was found in a wheel pit of a blacksmith shop. The victim's trousers pockets had been cut and turned inside out, thus causing a supposition that the man was either murdered and robbed or was frozen to death after tearing his clothes by falling into the hole.

It is the opinion of the coroner that the man was asleep under a carriage top and that he was either shoved into the pit or rolled into it and was frozen to death.

Without alcohol or poisonous drugs, Father John's Medicine cures throat and lungs, builds up the body and makes strength. It drives the impurities out of the system and strengthens each organ of the body, enabling each to do its work properly. Father John's Medicine is the best remedy ever prescribed for building up the system. Not a patent medicine.

ALEXANDER SEALEY DIED THIS MORNING

Hotel Proprietor Succumbs to Brief Illness—Sixty Years Old.

FUNERAL SERVICES HELD ON THURSDAY

Formerly Employe of Bureau of Engraving, Where His Father Worked.



ALEXANDER SEALEY, Well-Known Hotel Proprietor Dead.

Alexander Sealey, proprietor of the Stratford Hotel, Fourteenth and Monroe streets northwest, died at 5:25 o'clock this morning in his apartment at the hotel. Mr. Sealey had been ill since last Tuesday, following a complication of diseases. He is survived by his wife, formerly Miss Bishop of New Jersey.

Funeral services for Mr. Sealey will be held at 3 o'clock Thursday afternoon in Mt. Pleasant Congregational Church. The Rev. M. Ross Fishburn will officiate and burial will be in Congressional Cemetery.

Mr. Sealey had lived in Washington twenty-eight years having come here from New York. He was sixty years old and before assuming the proprietorship of the Stratford was an employe of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. His father, Alfred Sealey, was one of the most noted head engravers in the United States and much of his work is now used on Government notes. Since he assumed charge of the Stratford some years ago, Mr. Sealey had become widely known, particularly among Government employes, among whom his hospitality was exceedingly popular. His manner was always cordial and he gave his personal attention to every detail of the management of the hotel. His death this morning was deeply regretted by guests of the hotel who hardly realized the seriousness of his condition.

TWO ARE BURNED IN GAS LAUNCH

NORFOLK, Va., March 23.—Information has reached here of the burning to death on Chocketuck creek near "Cidenten," Saturday night, of Richard Lee Armstrong, formerly of Portsmouth, and Edward Matthews.

They were in a gasoline launch with R. L. Skinner when the tank of gasoline exploded. Armstrong and Matthews were enveloped in flames and were soon dead. Skinner escaped. Armstrong, who was twenty-eight years old, is survived by a widow.

ASKS ABOUT LYNCHING.

ELKINS, W. Va., March 23.—Governor Glasscock and Prosecuting Attorney Kump held a consultation over the long-distance phone today in connection with the lynching at Whitmer, the governor making still further inquiries as to what was to be done regarding the lynching as a stain upon the State's name.

CAST IS ADEQUATE.

As to the character portrayals themselves the cast get all there is in the play out of it. The dual parts of Jack Straw and the Archduke of Pomerania drew to have been made for John Drew. As appropriately told in the lines of the opening act "He is thoroughly at home anywhere you put him" and this definition of Jack Straw fits the real John Drew. His easy, nonchalant and distinctly natural way in all the trying situations added much to the gaiety of the production and the smoothness with which it ran. Many of the scenes received a warm welcome. Her interpretation of the newly rich, title-hunting Mrs. Parker Jennings was excellent throughout, showing a study of a character unfamiliar to most of those heretofore assumed by her.

Miss Mary Boland, as Ethel, who thoroughly acceptable as the sweet English girl who has a distate for the snobbishness and schemes of the nouveau riche, has been particularly out of place that she should be a member of such a family. Adelaide Prince, always capable and entertaining in any role, was an excellent Lady Wainly and Edgar L. Davenport as Holland, and Frank Goldsmith, as Lord Sago, assume well the other important parts, filled on the whole by a competent cast.

GAYETY—"Girls From Happyland" Exploits Billy W. Watson.

Billy W. Watson, who practically started his stage career in this city several years ago as a member of a stock company, and who has since developed into one of the cleverest comedians on any burlesque circuit, is the real star of the "Girls from Happyland" company at the Gayety this week. Although up to the usual standard of productions of its sort, the show as a whole is more noteworthy almost entirely around Watson, and that Joe Hartig, the manager, made no mistake in this move was shown by the manner in which both audiences enjoyed the affair yesterday.

Both Mrs. Watson, Lizzie Freilich is the main attraction, and scores heavily by a couple of catchy songs.

Both burlesques are good, while the best act in the six-number olio is the skit by Billy Watson and company.

BILLY POSSUM DIES IN RICH CITY STREET

Passes Away in Gutter, Amidst Luxurious Splendor of Proud Nation's Capital.

Billy Possum is dead. His body was found this morning in the gutter in front of 5 C street northeast. How he got there is a mystery. Patsy Mann, chief custodian of all dead animals found in the District, was notified, and will have complete charge of the funeral arrangements. Billy will be buried with the other "dead ones" in the District home yard. Mr. Mann says that he has been called upon to collect the bodies of almost all the species of animals known to zoology, but this will be the first time he has ever conducted the obsequies over a possum.

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That is why we say to every person suffering from piles or any form of rectal disease, send us your name and address and we will gladly send you a free trial package of the marvelous Pyramid Pile Cure. After using the trial you will hurry to your nearest druggist and get a 25 cent box of Pyramid Pile Cure, now admitted by thousands to be one of the most wonderful remedies and cures for Piles ever known.

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WAREHOUSE BURNS; HORSES PERISH. WESTMINSTER, Md., March 23.—The storage warehouse and stable adjoining owned by George W. Albaugh and occupied by the Albaugh Babylon Company, wholesale dealers in groceries, have been partly destroyed by fire. Two fine draft horses perished in the flames.

This Strained Eye

is due to the fact that the wear of the vision is blurred by the annoying division line in the lens of ordinary bifocals. Perfect joining of the lenses without any semblance of a division line is but one of the many superior features of LEESE'S INVISIBLE BIFOCALS. Inspection Always Invited. M. A. Leese, Manufacturing Optician, 614 8th Street N. W.

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